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NOTES
ON THE NAME AND FAMILY OF
DEVERELL

Reprinted from THE GENEALOGICAL QUARTERLY

COMPILED BY
R. J. L. DEVERELL

LONDON:

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THE MITRE PRESS, Mitre Chambers, Mitre Street, E.C.3

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THE 22ND DAY OF JULY 1970 AND

THE EIGHTH DAY OF JULY 1970

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, I, JOHN W.

WILLIAMS, JR., DOB: 1940-01-01, RESIDENCE:

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The following notes are chiefly derived from the writings of Thomas Lipscombe, scholar and historian ; a man to whose brilliant research we are greatly indebted. In the first half of last century Lipscombe compiled two great historical works, each comprising several volumes packed with detail and unique in style. We are on firm ground with Lipscombe's History of England (1840) and History of Bucks (1848). Lipscombe gives us the derivation of the family name of Deverell beyond question. From him we learn that, prior to the year 1300, the name had several variants in form. He quotes the result of his research to show the gradual development of a family surname from Devoir-Royal giving us four different spellings in use before the year 1300. These are Devoroill, Devoroiall, Deverel and Deverell. Writing as he does in the 19th century, Lipscombe makes no pretence at any explanation of Devoir-Royal (Royal Duty) in relation to the Arms of Deverell, " three golden stirrups in pale upon a red shield."

Lipscombe records that John Deverell (knight) had the custody of Corfe Castle in the year 1325. In command of such a stronghold he would be a man of middle age, an adherent of Roger Mortimer. This becomes clear when Lipscombe proceeds to describe the conspiracy which resulted in the death

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of Edmund, Earl of Kent, in the year 1330. Edmund Earl of Kent, was uncle to King Edward the Third and brother to King Edward the Second (murdered in Berkeley Castle in the year 1327).

Lipscombe tells us how, in 1330, Baron Maltravers was executed after his arrest for his part in the death of the Earl of Kent, and he even records the name of his young esquire John Deverell, together with the information that this young man "made good his escape and fled overseas." Lipscombe does not state whether John Deverell (esquire) was the son of John Deverell (knight) who commanded at Corfe.

In Lipscombe's "History of Bucks" (1848) there is an engraved plate of the noble pedigree of the House of Spencer from the year 1200 down to Victorian days, which can be seen at the County Museum, Aylesbury. The Spencer Pedigree carefully records the marriage of Alice, daughter of Giles Deverell, because, in the year 1350, she married John Spencer, an ancestor of the present Earl Spencer. In 1350 the Spencers and the Deverells held lands adjacent to each other along the North Bucks border. Wealthy even in 1350 the Spencers grew fabulously rich on wool production. By the year 1506 they had acquired great landed estates and proceeded to erect a palatial family seat at Wormleighton, some five miles north-east of Edge Hill. To-day all that remains of the ancient glory of Wormleighton House is a magnificent stone portico standing amid a grove of noble trees upon a village green. But, on that portico engraved in stone are the arms of (1) Spencer of Althorpe,

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(2) Spencer, (3) *Deverell*, (4) Lincoln, (5) *Adams*, (6) Graunt,
(7) Rudnige.

All American tourists, in search of forgotten England, should pay a pilgrimage to this spot, which is but a few miles from Sulgrave Manor.

Our chief centre of interest, however, is the North Bucks village of Swanbourne, some five miles west of Bletchley. All guides to Bucks make reference to an old house of charm and character with date 1632 carved over the stone entrance. This is "Deverell's Farm" at Swanbourne, which should not be mistaken for the Old Manor House damaged by fire in 1808. A few yards away we note the Parish Church of Swanbourne, which contains a number of interesting memorials to two families of ancient renown. Within the sacred precincts of this venerable church the families of Deverell and Adams mingle together in a common dust. Let us enter the silent peace of this village sanctuary and look around.

Among many memorials to the members of the two families of Deverell and Adams who are buried here some at least can still be deciphered. Here we read "Near this place lie the remains of Mr. John Deverell, Lord of the prior moiety of this Manor, who died 21st September, 1784, aged 68 years," also "To the memory of Mr. Thomas Deverell who departed this life 20th August, 1674." But perhaps we cannot do better than to quote from an article which appeared in the *Leighton Buzzard Observer*, a local paper which enjoys a wide circulation in North Bucks. Under the heading "Burcott," the journal

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records that, in the year 1891, Oxford University conferred the degree of Bachelor of Arts upon Mr. F. A. Adams of Queen's College (son of Mr. H. C. Adams of Burcott House), whom it describes as of descent from "a very ancient family which formerly owned the Manor of Swanbourne . . . the family of Deverell . . . one of the most ancient and honourable quarterings of the Arms of Spencer." The paper continues:— Lipscombe records that about the year 1350 John Spencer, son of Sir William Spencer, an ancestor of the present Earl, married Alice daughter of Giles Deverell, *a direct descendant of one of the Conqueror's Norman Nobles*, and that later on several marriages took place between the same family (which still survives) and that of Adams, which is also testified to by numerous monuments in Swanbourne Church. The Arms of the Deverells are "an Antique Shield with a red ground and three gold stirrups in pale down the centre." (*Leighton Buzzard Observer*, 1891).

In the sixteenth century we come to a period of great interest with more records available. Between 1500 and 1540 we find mention of John and Thomas Deverell (possibly father and son) leaving bequests of tithe to Swanbourne Church in the form of Corn and Meal, and in 1552 we find Wylliam Deverell (possibly grandson) and Wylliam Lowe as Churchwardens, who gave account of Church Plate to the Royal Commission under the Act of 1549 (King Edward VI). It is clear that John and Thomas and William Deverell were interested in milling, for William Deverell died in 1559 leaving a windmill to his younger son Augustine, while we find that in 1597 John Deverell of Swanbourne left the Old windmill to his son John

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and the "New" windmill to his son William, also land known as "Vealles Close" to his son Matthew.

The Parish Registers at Winslow Church (North Bucks) dating back to 1560 reveal many records of the name of Deverell, entering George Deverell as baptised 31st May, 1576, John in 1592, Robert in 1593, also the marriage of Thomas Deverell to Marie Trelaine on September 14th, 1633. It would appear that Thomas Deverell "departed this life 20th August, 1674," from his memorial in the church at Swanbourne.

Throughout these notes the writer has been content to record only such facts as have been clearly established as the result of learned research by men like Thomas Lipscombe. Born 1885 he can trace his personal descent as far back as 1728, when his ancestors were in occupation of lands within five miles of Swanbourne.

Perhaps he can best conclude with the aid of the worthy Lipscombe.

The Historian of Bucks records the marriage of Thomas Deverell of Swanbourne to Anne Lamourne, which took place at Over-Winchendon on October 27th, 1698. In 1699 a dread visitor appeared in Swanbourne and in the Parish Church there is a large memorial with Coat of Arms emblazoned in colour. The inscription thereon tells the story of the young Squire aged 32 and his bride of 24 in the first year of their married life.

.... "Thomas Deverell and Anne his wife . . . in the year 1699 . . . from the Smallpox" . . .

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Engraved below their names is a couplet hardly to be surpassed as a tragic lament.

“ Not youth, nor beauty, wealth, descent, nor lands
can charm pale death nor stay his cruel hands.”

*(The following notes supplement the article on this
family in the Spring 1944 issue).*

Since the previous notes were compiled the writer has been able to visit Leighton Buzzard churchyard, where he has discovered the graves of “ Thomas Deverell, Gent,” who died 1765, his son (died 1796), and grandson (died 1825). On arrival at Leighton Buzzard, your contributor had the good fortune to meet an elderly resident, who was well-versed in local history. On the road to Stoke Hammond, he pointed out a very ancient house, known as “ Chelmscourt ” or “ Chemscote,” which was occupied by the Deverell family for centuries, passing out of their hands about 50 years ago. He was able to recall various farms in the district held by Deverells, of whom he spoke with evident knowledge and appreciation.

As regards the family of Adams, referred to in the notes, it is quite probable that American scholars might be able to establish a connection of great interest. Their enquiries should cover the area between Banbury and Bletchley.

As regards the death of Edmund Earl of Kent in 1330, the writer understands that a Parliament, held at Taunton in 1332, actually proscribed John Deverell (Esquire) as a traitor.

Owing to war conditions it has not been possible to pay a visit to Bradford-on-Avon (Wiltshire), where there is a very

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ancient church, which contains sundry memorials to landowners of the name of Deverell, whose old manor house still remains.

The Spencer pedigree at Aylesbury Museum appears to establish a blood relationship from the House of Le Despenser to Spencer and links through marriage with Cavendish and Spencer-Churchill in the 18th century.

The writer desires to record his indebtedness to a distant relative known personally to him some 30 years ago. In his later years, the late Mr. Frederick Deverell conducted a laborious research into his family history and established a clear and definite descent in the male line from the year 1728 to the present day. He died in 1917 and is buried in Tetsworth Churchyard, Oxfordshire. It is largely due to his work that these notes became possible.

FOOTNOTE:—Since these notes were completed our contributor has received further information of the greatest interest. He hears also of certain research being conducted at this very moment and he has a promise that the results of this research will be placed at his disposal. By this means it is hoped that a further article may become possible at a later date.

From the material collected by the late Mr. Frederick Deverell, it can be stated that he was able to trace his clear descent from GEORGE DEVERELL who was baptised at Swanbourne Parish Church in the year 1728 as the son of GEORGE and ELIZABETH DEVERELL. One of the grandsons of the infant George (John DEVERELL) removed from North Bucks in the year 1818 to the Tetsworth District of Oxfordshire where his descendants farmed lands until 1918. This JOHN DEVERELL died in 1839 leaving several sons, one of whom was the Grandfather of the writer of these notes.

